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ABSTRACT

The major problem investigated in this study focused on the views of principle administrators of the state departments of education (SDE) toward the service roles of campus laboratory schools. A secondary problem investigated concerned the comparison of the perceptions of SDE administrators when categorized according to their regional accrediting affiliation. In addition to the fifty SDEs, opinionaires were sent to Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. A total of 51 responses were received. The SDE administrators indicated that the most important role fulfilled by campus laboratory schools was that of a demonstration school for program development. Additional service roles of high importance were those of the laboratory school as a demonstration school for schools and school systems and the laboratory as a source for inservice education. Other service roles were noted: as a dissemination agency for curricular and instructional methods; fulfilling leadership roles in the school disciplines; and as an agency for disseminating instructional methods and strategies. There was little difference between the overall rating of SDE administrators in the North Central, Southern, and Middle States regional accrediting associations. Respondents in the Northwest region rated the service roles lower than did respondents in the other three. (JD)

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THE INSERVICE ROLES FULFILLED BY
CAMPUS LABORATORY SCHOOLS

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THE INSERVICE ROLES FULFILLED BY
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Bob Lumpkins
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The laboratory school concept was created by European advocates long before America became an independent nation. Although the original purpose of laboratory schools in Europe and the early schools in America was to provide a practicum site for prospective teachers, the scope of the laboratory school's mission was extended by John Dewey at the turn of the century. Dewey felt that the major purpose of the school should be to further the application of scientific investigation and research in everyday school activities (Rugg, 1926). The mission, even in these earlier years, was to influence how schooling was to take place in our Nation's classrooms.

Although some schools may have directed efforts toward research and experimentation, most continued to serve as a convenient site for pre-student teaching and student teaching experiences through the first half of this century.

The service role of laboratory schools has become less clear in the last twenty-five years. In 1948 the function of campus laboratory schools was radically redefined by a document published by the School and Community Laboratory Experiences Committee of the American Association of Teachers Colleges. A major recommendation was to remove student teaching from the laboratory school. A second recommendation was made to strengthen the research efforts of the schools. While the first recommendation came to pass, the second has almost remained dead in the water. As a consequence of this change, the mission and service role of the laboratory school has become less clear in recent years. If laboratory schools are to play a vital role in shaping

tomorrow's classroom, however, it is imperative that a clearly defined mission be established. This mission, if it is to be successful, must be understood and supported by the other agencies concerned with educational improvement.

Research Problem

The major problem investigated in this study focused on the views of top administrators of our state departments of education (SDE) toward the service roles of campus laboratory schools. A secondary problem investigated concerned the comparison of the perceptions of SDE administrators when categorized according to their regional accrediting affiliation.

Procedures

The Opinionaire used in this study was one part of a more comprehensive opinionaire which was developed, validated, and used in a national survey concerning the role of campus laboratory schools in the Spring of 1986. (Parker, Lumpkins, 1986) The participants responding to that survey were directors of campus laboratory schools at NCATE accredited universities. In the present study, the subjects were the principle administrators in our state departments of education. In addition to the fifty SDE, opinionaires were also sent to Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. A total of 51 responses were returned of all the 56 opinionaires mailed.

Findings

There are 87 campus laboratory schools currently in operation at NCATE accredited institutions. The vast majority of these schools are in the Southern Association, North Central Association, and the Middle States Association. The percent of completed responses by the SDE administrators in

these three regional accrediting areas far exceeded the percent of returns for the other states.

The SDE administrators indicated that the most important role fulfilled by campus laboratory schools was that of a demonstration school for program development. (See Table 1) Additional service roles of high importance were those of the laboratory school as a demonstration school for schools and school systems and the laboratory school as a source for inservice education. The other three service roles, namely, as a dissemination agency for curricula and instructional methods; fulfilling leadership roles in the school disciplines; and, as an agency for disseminating instructional methods and strategies, were also rated above the median in degree of importance.

There was very little difference between the overall rating of SDE administrators in the North Central, Southern, and Middle States accrediting regions. Respondents in the Northwest region generally rated the service roles lower in importance than the respondents in the other three regions. The percent of responses received from SDE administrators in the Western and New England regions was low. Of those responses received from the Western and New England regions, there seemed to be a tendency for the SDE administrators to basically view the laboratory school as a demonstration school.

Conclusions

The findings of this study appear to support the idea that campus laboratory schools and agencies within our state departments of education should and could work together in an effort to better meet the needs of the state education system. Laboratory schools provide the ideal environment for developing curriculum, piloting programs, demonstrating methods, etc. These schools have ready access to the human and material resources of the

university and the expertise of educators in nearby schools. By unifying our efforts in staff and program development, the campus laboratory schools and State Departments of Education can have a positive impact on shaping tomorrow's classrooms.

Table 1

Mean Ratings on the Importance of Six Service Roles
of Campus Laboratory Schools by
State Department of Education Administrators

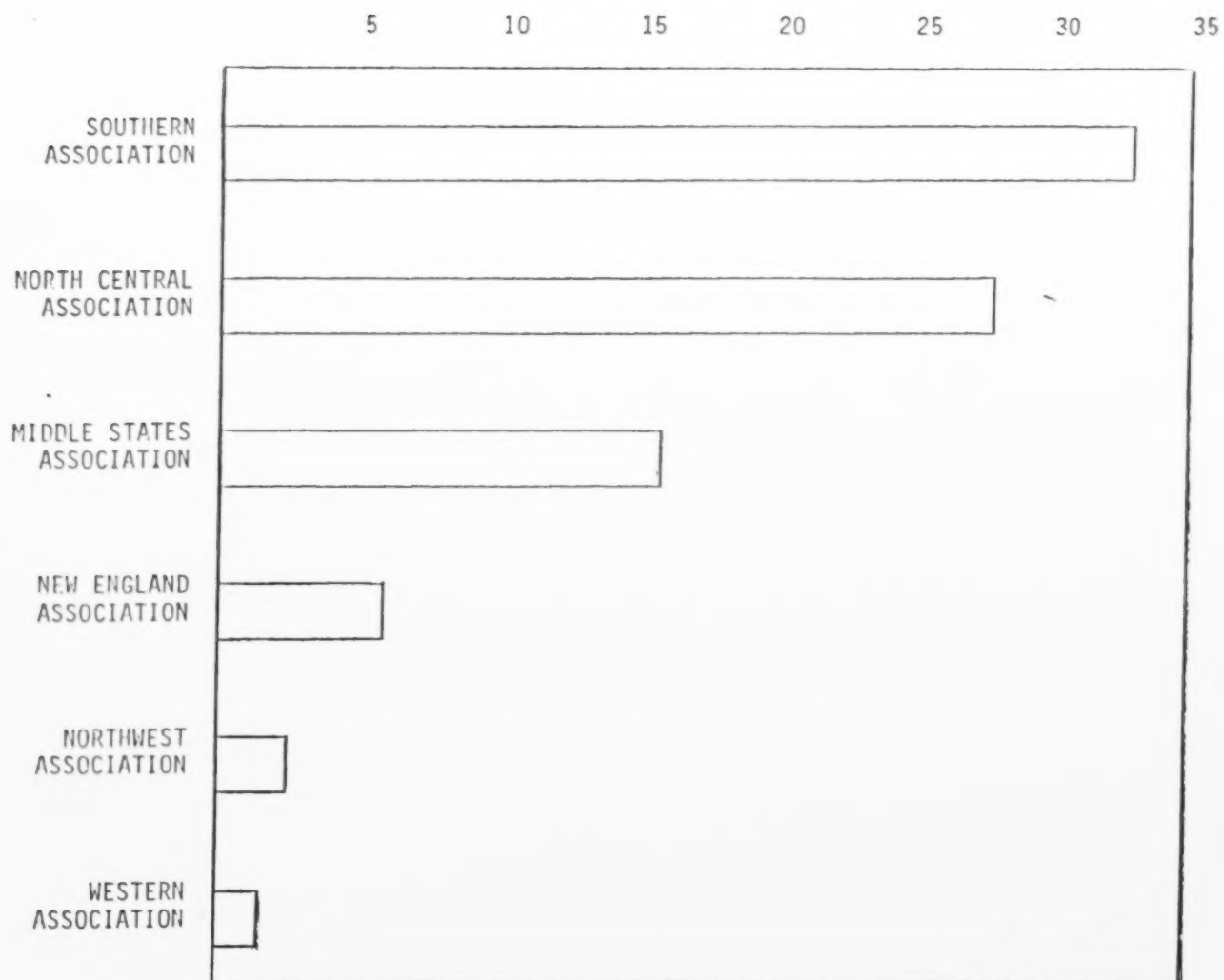
Roles	Northwest	North Central	Southern	Middle States	New England and Western	Average Mean
Demonstration School	4.25	4.31	4.90	4.33	INSUFFICIENT DATA	4.45
Program Development	3.75	4.62	5.20	4.33		4.48
Dissemination of Methods	2.75	4.23	4.10	4.33		3.85
Inservice	3.50	4.25	4.00	4.75		4.13
Dissemination of Curriculum	2.75	4.67	3.80	4.67		3.97
Leadership in Disciplines	3.50	4.15	4.10	4.00		3.94
Average Means	3.42	4.37	4.35	4.40		

UNITED STATES (Including Alaska and Hawaii)



NCATE LABORATORY SCHOOLS

NUMBER OF NCATE ACCREDITED LABORATORY SCHOOLS
IN THE SIX ACCREDITING REGIONS OF THE UNITED STATES



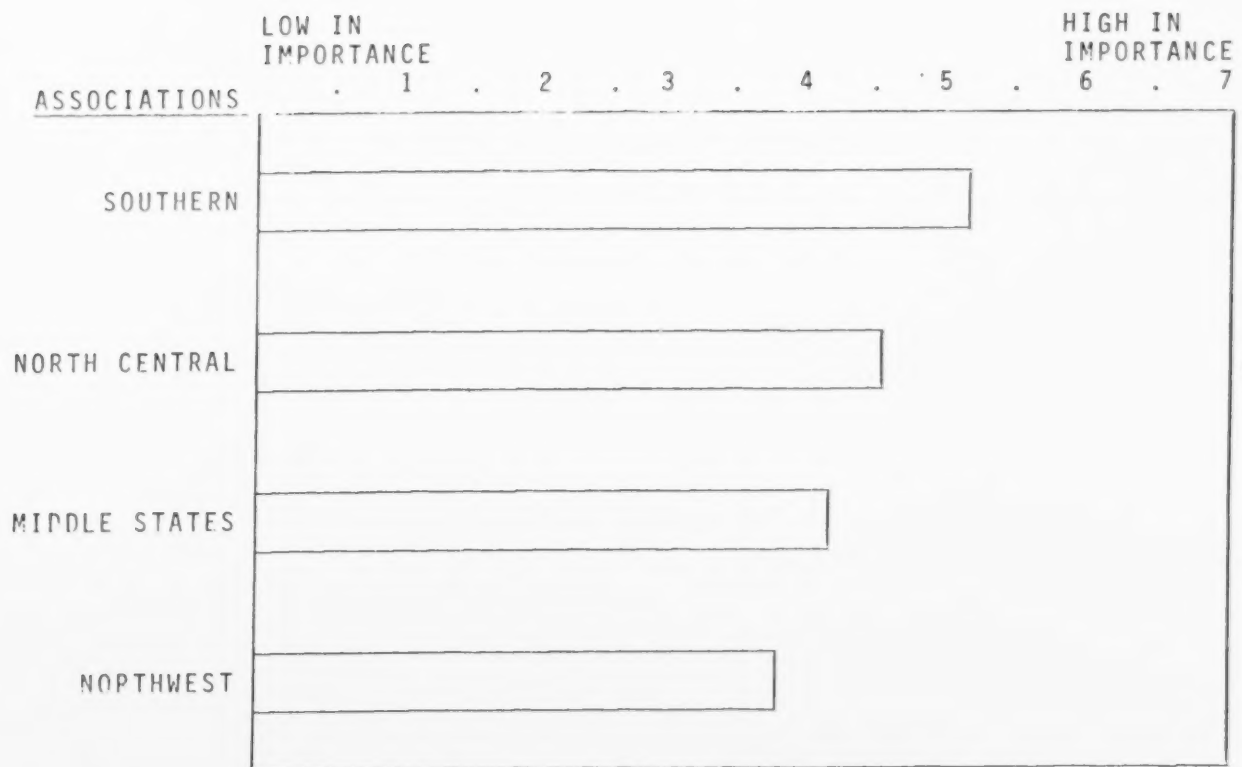
INSERVICE ROLES OF THE CLS

IMPORTANCE OF THE CAMPUS LABORATORY SCHOOL'S SERVICE ROLE
AS PERCEIVED BY DIRECTORS OF STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTERS



INSERVICE ROLES OF THE CLS

LABORATORY SCHOOL'S SERVICE ROLE IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT



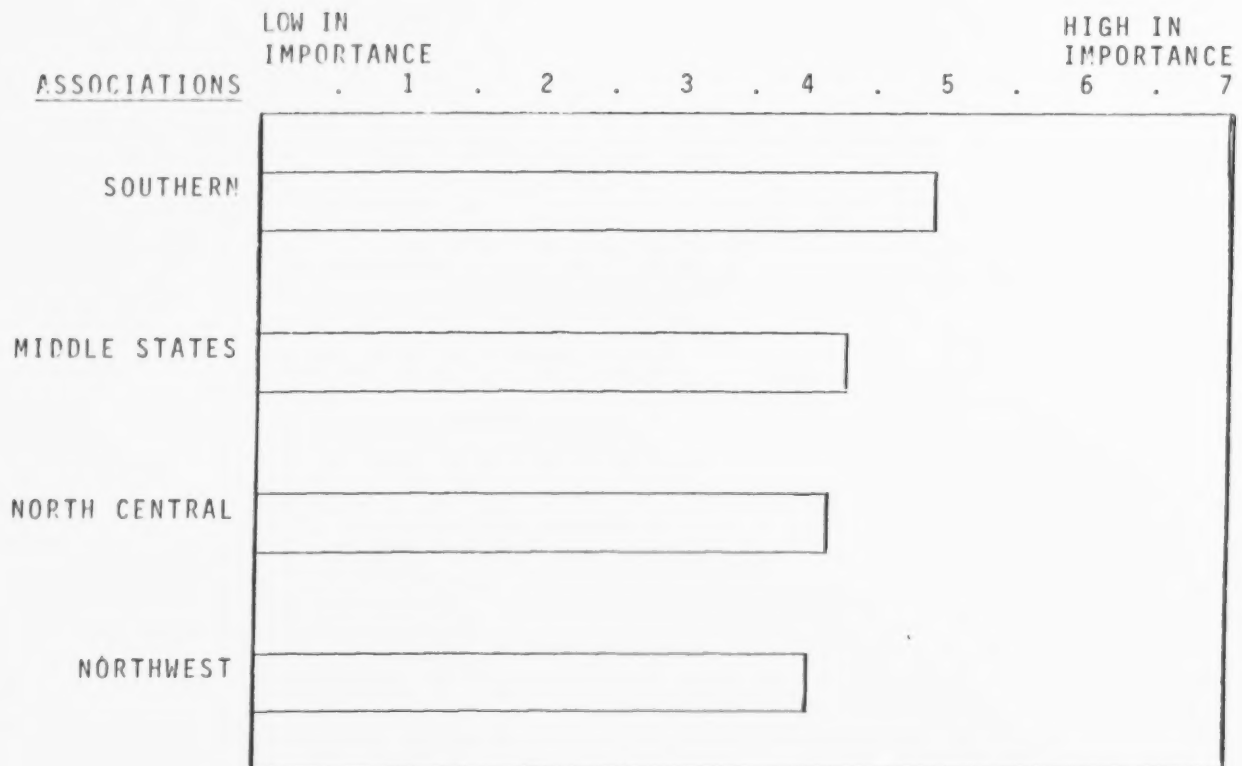
INSUFFICIENT DATA

New England Association

Western Association

INSERVICE ROLES OF THE CLS

LABORATORY SCHOOL'S SERVICE ROLE
AS A DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL



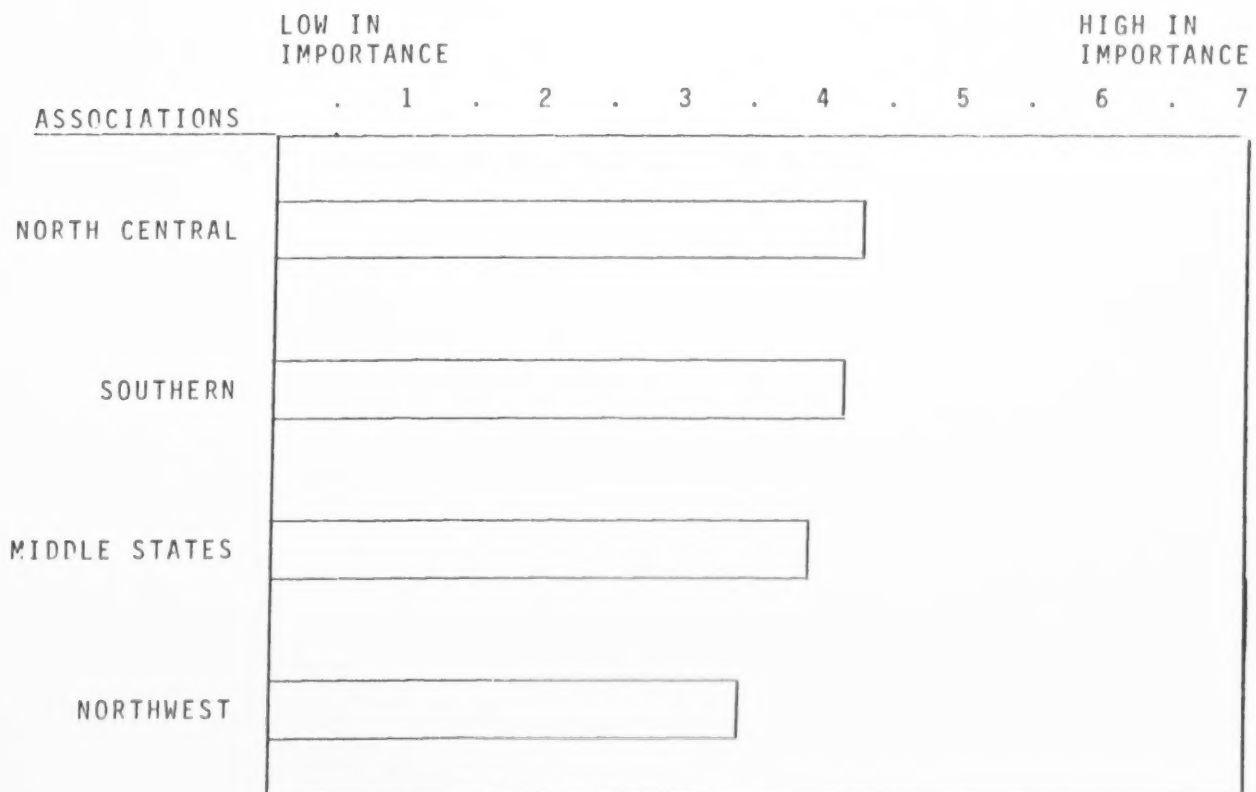
INSUFFICIENT DATA

New England Association

Western Association

INSERVICE ROLES OF THE CLS

LABORATORY SCHOOL'S SERVICE ROLE
IN PROVIDING LEADERSHIP IN SPECIFIC SUBJECT AREAS



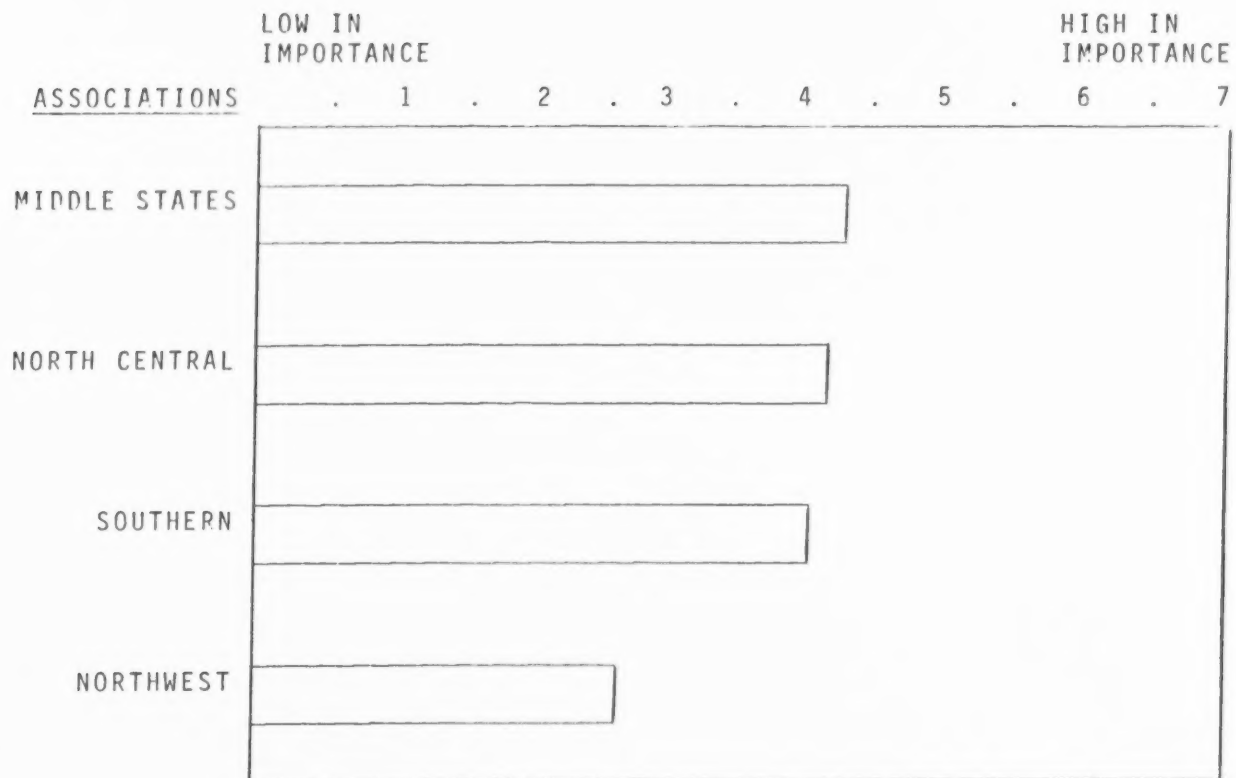
INSUFFICIENT DATA

New England Association

Western Association

INSERVICE ROLES OF THE CLS

LABORATORY SCHOOL'S SERVICE ROLE
IN DISSEMINATING METHODS AND STRATEGIES



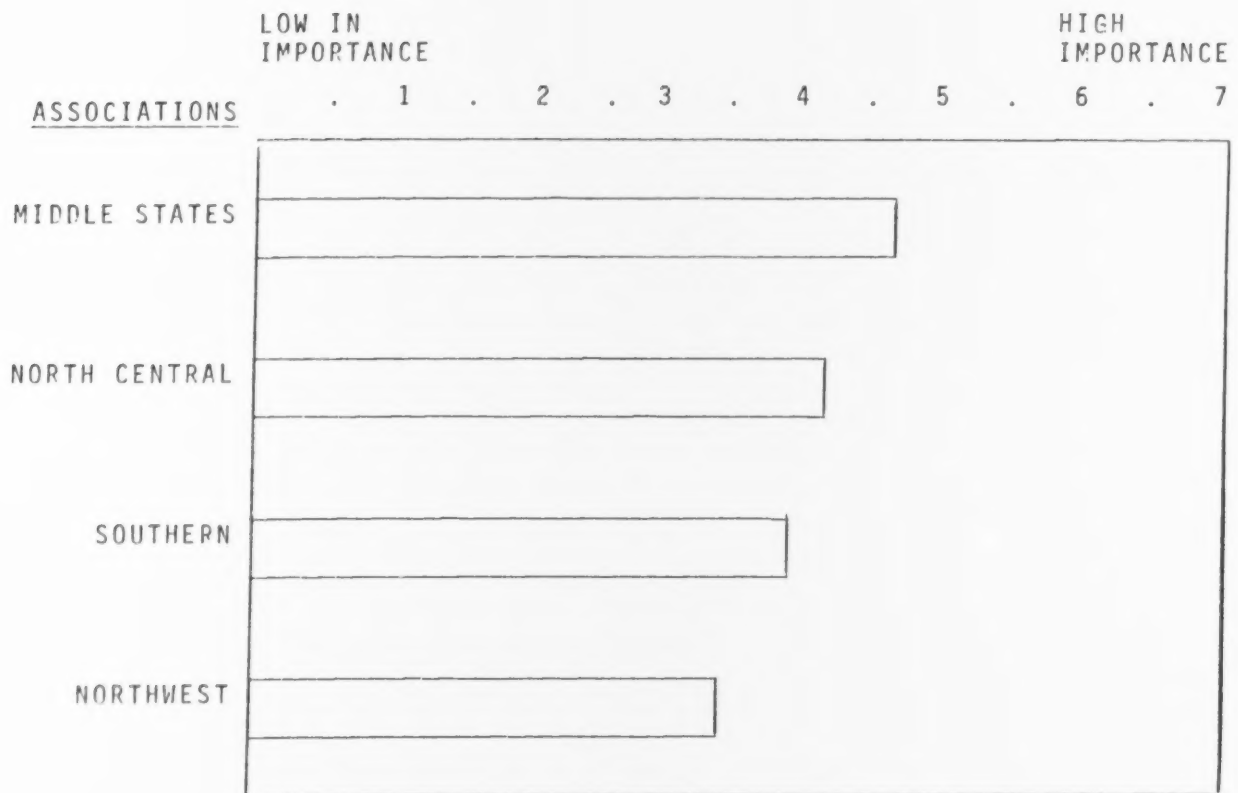
INSUFFICIENT DATA

New England Association

Western Association

INSERVICE ROLES OF THE CLS

LABORATORY SCHOOL'S SERVICE ROLE
IN PROVIDING INSERVICE EDUCATION



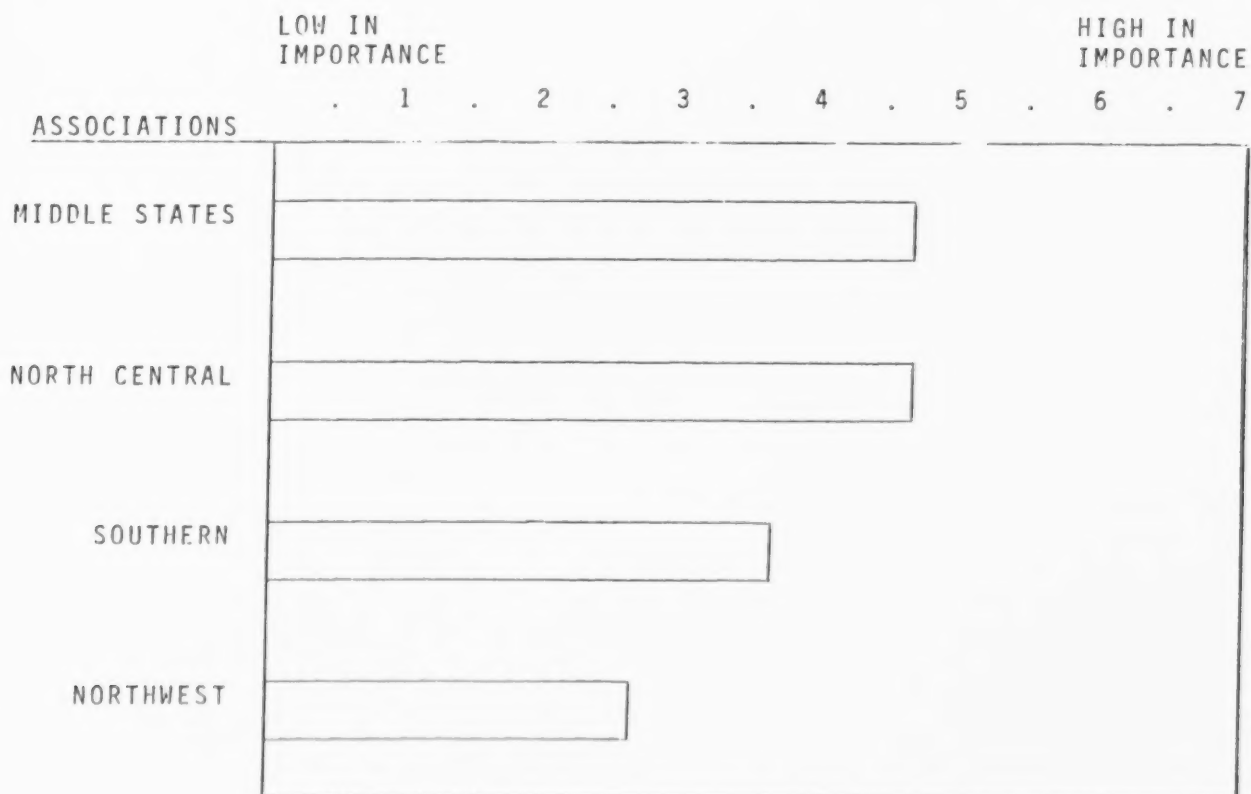
INSUFFICIENT DATA

New England Association

Western Association

INSERVICE ROLES OF THE CLS

LABORATORY SCHOOL'S SERVICE ROLE
IN DISSEMINATING CURRICULUM INFORMATION AND INTERPRETATION



INSUFFICIENT DATA

New England Association

Western Association